



Medical Provider Network

Workers' Compensation

REFORMS

How the medical network will affect the self-insured community

L&I is recruiting health-care providers now for the network

- Effective January 1, 2013, Washington providers must be in the new statewide workers' compensation medical network to treat injured workers beyond an initial office or emergency room visit.
- The network will serve injured workers covered both by self-insured employers and L&I.
- Current and new providers for L&I must apply, including current providers for the Centers of Occupational Health and Education (COHE).

Only certain provider types must join the network

The following provider types that practice in Washington State must be in the network to treat injured workers beyond the initial office visit or emergency room visit, beginning January 1, 2013:

- Physicians
- Chiropractors
- Naturopathic Physicians
- Podiatric Physicians and Surgeons
- Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioners
- Physician Assistants
- Dentists
- Optometrists

Other provider types and out-of-state providers will be invited to join the network later. Until then, they can continue to treat injured workers using their L&I provider number.

What self-insured employers or third-party administrators (TPAs) will need to do

Beginning January 1, 2013, self-insured employers or TPAs will need to pay only network providers for ongoing care.

Self-insured employers must:

- Make sure the provider is in the provider network.
- Let the injured worker know if their current provider is not in the provider network.
- Assist the injured worker in accessing the list of providers in the network.
- Not pay bills beyond the initial visit for providers not in the network.

Get your Self-Insurance questions about the network answered at ProviderNetworkSIQue@Lni.wa.gov.

How self-insured employers will confirm that a provider is in the network

Self-insured employers or their TPAs must be able to distinguish between network and non-network providers.



Beginning in October 2012, L&I will offer two ways to determine a provider's network status:

- An enhanced online Provider Directory, which will allow you to search by a number of criteria, such as provider type, specialty, and location.
- Provider Network Status Data, which will be available for download. The data will also contain historical network status. For information, contact David Overby, Project Manager, at 360-902-6791 or Dave.Overby@Lni.wa.gov.

Help us recruit providers!

If you come in contact with doctors that have not yet applied for the network, please encourage them to apply now. Early application will reduce chances of interrupting care for their patients after January 1, 2013. Offer them this link on L&I's website where they will find the information they need to get started: www.JointheNetwork.Lni.wa.gov.

If you have questions about the network, please contact us at 360-902-5140 or by email at ProvNet@Lni.wa.gov.

Common questions and answers about the network

1. Why was it necessary to create a provider network?

High-quality medical care helps both injured workers and their employers, by supporting recovery which reduces unnecessary costs. Research shows that health-care providers using best practices for occupational medicine generally have better outcomes with injured workers.

In one of the 2011 Workers' Compensation Reform bills, the Legislature passed SSB 5801 directing L&I to create a statewide network for providers who treat injured workers. To increase the use of occupational health best practices, the legislation also called for expanding access to the state's Centers of Occupational Health Education (COHE) and for the creation of a second tier, or top tier, of providers in the network.

2. Why is the network important?

The workers' compensation medical network will be made up of providers that meet

standards required by other large health insurers in the state. Our goal is for workers to get broad access to great care, return to good health and get back on the job sooner.

3. If a provider of the type that is being recruited to the network does NOT enroll, will they be able to treat injured workers?

If a provider in one of the recruited provider types chooses not to become part of the network, starting in January 2013 they will be able to treat injured workers for *only*:

- An initial office visit, or
- Emergency room visit.

Any injured workers in their care will need to move to a network provider no later than January 1, 2013. (Note that treating injured workers for an initial office or emergency room visit will require an L&I provider number.)

4. If a worker is taken to a hospital, will the services be covered even though the treatment comes from non-network providers?

Yes. For initial treatment, including hospital admission, an injured worker can see a non-network provider. For additional care, workers must transfer to a network provider.

5. Future plans — will L&I expand the COHEs and create the network top tier?

L&I must expand access to care through the Centers of Occupational Health & Education (COHEs) to all injured workers in the state by 2015. However, participation in COHE will be voluntary for self-insured employers.

The top tier of the network will begin in mid-2013. L&I is working closely with an advisory group to develop standards and incentives for the top tier providers.

Other resources

For more information about the Provider Network and other reforms:

www.ProviderNetwork.Lni.wa.gov.